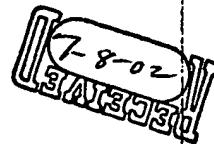


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communication link in which acknowledgment packets and payload packets are conveyed to a first node from a second node of said link wherein said acknowledgment packets include information indicative of a sequence of successive payload packets successfully received at said first node, said method comprising:

transmitting a succession of payload packets from said second node to said first node,

generating acknowledgment packets at said first node that indicate a succession of payload packets successfully received at said first node, and

suppressing the return transmission of at least a portion of said acknowledgment packets generated in said generating step from said first node to said second node wherein at least one unsuppressed acknowledgment packet that is transmitted to said second node has a sequence number embracing a sequence number contained in suppressed ones of said acknowledgment packets.

15. (New) In a two way asymmetric network communication system that transfers information between a host and a plurality of remote devices over a shared medium wherein said remote devices receive high speed downstream information from said host over a downstream channel of said shared medium and transmit lower speed return information over an upstream channel to said host, and wherein said network communication system includes a network management unit located at a head end of a

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broadcast facility for controlling switching/routing functions in both said downstream and upstream communication channels, a method of transmitting data from a transmitter node of said network to a receiver node of said network, said method comprising:

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transmitting a series of data packets from said transmitter node to said receiver node wherein respective ones of said data packets include sequence numbers indicative of a succession of data packets transmitted from said transmitter node,

generating acknowledgment packets that contain information indicative of successive ones of data packets successfully received at said receiver node, and

suppressing the return transmission of at least a portion of said acknowledgment packets from said receiver node to said transmitter node wherein at least one un suppressed acknowledgment packet that is transmitted to said transmitter node has a sequence number embracing sequence numbers contained in suppressed ones of said acknowledgments.

40. (New) An asymmetric communication system for enabling communication between a host computer and plural remote clients over a shared medium, said system comprising:

upstream and downstream channels that operate at one of different respective speeds and different protocols;

said plural remote clients being operable for communication with the host

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computer over said shared medium wherein said host computer transmits data packets to said plural remote clients over said downstream channel according to a downstream channel protocol and said plural remote clients transmit data packets to said host computer over an upstream channel according to an upstream channel protocol; and a network manager located at a head end facility for managing both said upstream and downstream channels, said network manager being operable:

for effectuating generation acknowledgment packet of data packets successfully received by said receiver node,

for effectuating transmission of data packets from a transmitting end of the network to a receiver node located at a receiving end of said network wherein said data packets include indicia for identifying respective ones of said data packets, and wherein said receiver node includes a return-transmit buffer for holding at least one acknowledgment packet for transmission to said transmitter node, said acknowledgment packet identifying a sequence of data packets successfully received by said receiver node, and

for discarding acknowledgment packets that contain information indicative of information contained in other acknowledgment packets to be sent to said host computer.

41. (New) The system as recited in claim 40 wherein said downstream channel

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resides in said shared medium, and wherein said shared medium comprises one of a wireless broadcast network, a direct broadcast satellite network and a CATV network, and said upstream channel resides in one of a wireless return network, a PSTN, a return-on-cable network and a router return network.

42. (New) The method as recited in claim 39 wherein said downstream channel resides in said shared medium, and wherein said shared medium comprises one of a wireless broadcast network, a direct broadcast satellite network and a CATV network, and said upstream channel resides in one of a wireless return network, a PSTN, a return-on-cable network and a router return network.

43. (New) The method as recited in claim 38 wherein said downstream channel resides in said shared medium, and wherein said shared medium comprises one of a wireless broadcast network, a direct broadcast satellite network and a CATV network, and said upstream channel resides in one of a wireless return network, a PSTN, a return-on-cable network and a router return network. --

REMARKS

The additional claims provide alternative protection for applicants' invention by re-characterizing the manner of suppressing or discarding acknowledgment packets.